

**Conservation Commission Minutes
Tuesday, January 14, 2014
Town Hall Meeting Room, Old Town Rd.
5:30pm**

Present: Members: Chair Ned Phillips, Jr., Vice Chair Fred Leeder, John Hopf, Marea Mott, Les Slate, and David Roosa. Absent: Donald Littlefield. Also present was Administrative Assistant Teressa Chmiel for the recording of the minutes.

Call to Order

Chair Ned Phillips, Jr. called the meeting to order at 5:30p.m.

Correspondence:

Receipt of an email dated December 13, 2013 from Chris Warfel to Town Clerk re: Conservation Commission.

The Commission is in receipt of photos from the December Conservation Commission meeting from Chris Warfel regarding Sand Fencing on Charleston Beach.

Mr. Warfel asked to have the opportunity to discuss the benefits of the roping used for fencing. He stated the road crew collected burlap roping from the storm after Hurricane Sandy. He explained when Coastal was on the island surveying the damage from the storm he asked if he could use the rope for testing. He further explained, Mike Shea, Highway Supervisor gave him permission to install the fencing at Charleston Beach. He noted he used 4'x4' posts buried in sand; he wrapped the burlap around the top of post using string pulled from the netting.

Mr. Hopf replied to Mr. Warfel the original use of snow fencing is to keep people off the dunes; whereas, the roping catches the sand. Mr. Hopf suggested to the Commission to test the roping in blowout areas.

Mr. Warfel acknowledged the sand fencing is not as rugged or aesthetically pleasing, but has a role to play. The sand fencing prevents injuries from wire debris left behind from the traditional snow fencing, no significant deterioration with the jute material and people will not tear down and burn.

Mr. Warfel will confirm the burlap is being stored behind the Highway building. He thanked the Commission for their time.

Receipt of an Assent from CRMC File No.: 2013-11—098 applicable thereto: install snow fencing along the length of Middle Pond as per the CRMC approved plans; all work to be above MHW located at plat 20, lot 20; off Corn Neck Road, New Shoreham, RI.

No action was needed or taken.

Schedule a work date for Dune Restoration.

A work date for volunteers to repair foot paths for dune restoration is scheduled for January 21, 2014 at 2:00pm.

Advisory to the Town Manager re: Maintaining Ash Trees on Payne Farm Road.

Claire Costello, who owns property on Payne Road, contacted Mr. Phillips, Jr. by telephone regarding ash trees on her side of the property being overcome by vines. He stated she had asked the Town repeatedly if they would help take care of the trees; unfortunately no action has been taken. Mr. Phillips, Jr. suggested sending an advisory to the Town Manager asking if the road crew could possibly assist in maintaining these trees.

Mr. Phillips, Jr. made a motion seconded by Mr. Hopf to send a favorable recommendation to the Town Manager asking for assistance from the Road Crew to remove the overgrown vines from the line of Historical/Heritage Ash trees on Payne Road by Claire Costello's property.

6 Ayes (Phillips, Leeder, Mott, Slate, Hopf and Roosa)

0 Nays

1 Absent (Littlefield)

Report from John Hopf regarding Sea Level Rise and Global Warming.

Mr. Hopf reported that at the last Conservation meeting he told the Commission he would research and report back on the sea level rise and global warming. After discussion ensued Mr. Hopf discussed his review indicated that no acceleration in sea level rise happened in the past two decades and that the attention will be changes to the insurance industry. Mr. Hopf wishes to coordinate a liaison between the Commission and the Block Island Conservancy to open lines of communication. Mr. Leeder disagreed on Mr. Hopf's findings. Mr. Leeder explained to Mr. Hopf that he has been attending meetings with DEM and the accelerated sea level rise will be significant in the next 30 years. Mr. Leeder directed the Commission to the source of information which can be found at www.beachsamp.org.

Update on Recent meeting of Town Council with Rhode Island Resource Recovery concerning Composting.

Mr. Slate and Ms. Mott attended the meeting on composting with the Town Council. Ms. Mott discussed the fee change the state will charge towns in the next year, addressed options of restaurant, building materials and yard composting. Businesses are bringing private dumpsters to the island i.e. Spring House, Interstate Navigation, Harborside, Block Island Grocery to name a few. Ms. Mott and Mr. Slate reported the Johnson landfill will be full in about 25 years. Terri Chmiel included in the Commission's packets brochures of dos and don'ts of recycling posted on the Town's web site.

Mr. Hopf made a motion to send a favorable advisory to the Town Council asking if money is in the budget to run the list of “What items can be recycled?” and “Recycling don’ts” in the Block Island Times.

6 Ayes (Phillips, Leeder, Mott, Slate, Hopf and Roosa)
1 Absent (Littlefield)

0 Nays

Approval of November 2014 Meeting Schedule.

Due to Veterans Day falling on November 11, 2014 the meeting was rescheduled to November 18, 2014.

Approval of Minutes.

Mr. Leeder made a motion seconded by Mr. Phillips, Jr. to approve the minutes from December 10, 2013 as presented with a minor correction.

6 Ayes (Phillips, Leeder, Mott, Slate, Hopf and Roosa)
1 Absent (Littlefield)

0 Nays

Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:08pm in a motion by Mr. Leeder and seconded by Mr. Phillips, Jr.

6 Ayes (Phillips, Leeder, Mott, Slate, Hopf and Roosa)
1 Absent (Littlefield)

0 Nays

Respectfully submitted

Teressa L. Chmiel

Minutes approved: February 11, 2014